CFCA AWARENESS TRIPS

trip information

*The following information is for **2013** trips. The dates and trips to specific countries change from year to year depending on interest, the political situation within the countries and the ability of CFCA projects to host an awareness trip. A detailed schedule and additional information will be sent one to two weeks prior to departure in the pre-departure packet.*

# DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

**Trip Dates: March 2 – 9, 2013**

**Trip Size: 12-25 participants**

Please register by Jan. 2 to reserve your spot.
If you still wish to register after this date, contact a CFCA trip coordinator regarding availability.

**Trip Fee: $500**

Includes food, lodging and in-country transportation.
Airfare is **not** included.

**On your trip to the Dominican Republic, you may participate in some or all of the following activities:**

- Be welcomed by the local CFCA staff who will be your hosts for the week, ensuring that your visit is safe and enjoyable
- Spend time with your sponsored friend and possibly the family
- Visit the homes and communities of CFCA sponsored friends and their families, where you will learn about their joys and challenges
- After flying into Santo Domingo, the first city of the New World, you will enjoy views of sugar cane and coffee plantations as you visit agricultural communities in the highlands of the Caribbean island.

## Entry and Exit Requirements

**A passport valid for at least six months beyond the end of your intended stay is required to enter the Dominican Republic.** U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a stay of 90 days or less, but they must purchase a tourist card upon arrival in order to enter the country. **Tourist cards cost $10 and must be paid for in U.S. dollars.** *All fees are subject to change.* While in the Dominican Republic, travelers should carry their passports or a photocopy of it at all times. Participants who will be traveling with a minor should contact a CFCA trip coordinator for additional information.

## Airport and Travel Arrangements

**Applicants should await receipt of the confirmation letter before making airline reservations.** In the meantime, we strongly encourage you to research airfares with a travel agent, the airlines or via the Internet. Vista Travel may also be contacted regarding airfare at (800) 537-5066. This agency is familiar with our programs and schedules.

All trip participants should fly into **Santo Domingo Las Americas Airport (SDQ)** in Santo Domingo on the first scheduled day of the trip and depart from the same airport on the last scheduled day. **The CFCA staff will meet all travelers at the airport who arrive on the scheduled arrival day. Do not accept offers of transportation from anyone other than the CFCA team.**

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## Accommodations and Food

All trip participants will stay in simple accommodations near the CFCA projects, usually in a hotel. Married couples and families will stay in private rooms. Individuals will be assigned a roommate. Running water for showers is readily available, but it may not be heated. **Tap water is unsafe for drinking.** Instead, the project will provide bottled water. Alcoholic beverages are not included in the trip fee.

Participants will eat simple meals that reflect the local cuisine. All food is prepared with purified water. All meals will be eaten with the group. Do not purchase food from street vendors. Meals are often served at a later hour than most Americans are accustomed to eating. We recommend bringing snacks such as dried fruit and nut mixes, raisins, granola bars, etc., as you may want something to eat between scheduled meals.

The electrical current in the Dominican Republic is within the same range as the voltage in the U.S., and the shape of the plugs are the same. No electrical converters or adapters are necessary. Diagrams of the outlets are available at www.electricaloutlet.org.

## Climate

The Dominican Republic enjoys beautiful tropical weather all year round, with the average annual temperature hovering around 77 degrees. From November to April, the coastal regions generally experience highs of around 83 degrees during the day and lows of about 68 degrees in the evening.

## Health/Medical Preparations

**Contact your medical doctor or local health department for immunization recommendations based on your health history.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/travel has country specific recommendations regarding immunizations. You may also contact them by phone at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). According to the CDC the regions of the Dominican Republic with malaria include areas that will be visited by our trip. CFCA staff members are not qualified to offer advice on immunizations.

You should consult with your medical insurance company prior to traveling to confirm whether your policy applies in a foreign country. **If your policy does not cover emergency expenses such as medical evacuation, we urge you to consider the purchase of temporary travel insurance.** Many insurance plans, including Medicare, do not cover treatment outside of the U.S. You may obtain further information on travel insurance from a travel agent or through research on the Internet.

## Currency Exchange and Handling

The currency used is the **Dominican Peso** (DOP). Your lodging, food and in-country transportation are included in the trip fee. You should bring additional money for the purchase of snacks and souvenirs, and to cover entry/exit fees. You should not carry bills in denominations greater than $20 because they may be difficult for local banks or vendors to exchange. Do not bring torn or severely worn currency. You can bring U.S. dollars into the country. You will be provided with an opportunity to exchange money upon arrival either at the airport, at the lodging, or another method. Traveler's checks are not recommended, and ATMs are not readily available.